

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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SUBJECT: COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA ON "PRG" TAKEOVER IN BAN ME THUOT

REF: SAIGON 3223

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. THE "PRG'S" LIBERATION RADIO HAS RECENTLY BROADCAST SEVERAL REPORTS ON "PRG" ACTIVITIES IN BAN ME THUOT SINCE ITS "LIBERATION." AFTER THE COMMUNISTS GRAINED MILITARY CONTROL ALLEGEDLY ON MARCH 11, NGUYEN QUANG CHINH, A MEMBER OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE "PRG" REPRESENTATION IN CENTRAL TRUNG BO, MET ON MARCH 16 WITH DARLAC PROVINCE EDUCATORS AND TEACHERS (REFTEL). THE FOLLOWING DAY, ACCORDING TO HANOI'S VIETNAM NEWS AGENCY, THIS "ENVOY OF THE PRG" WAS "WELCOMED" AT A MEETING WHICH INCLUDED " BUDDHIST AND CATHOLIC PRIESTS AND FOREIGN RESIDENTS." ALSO ON MARCH 16, DANG TRAN THI, A VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOUTH VIETNAM LIBERATION FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS, MET WITH WORKERS (REFTEL).

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2. ON MARCH 18, ACCORDING TO LIB RADIO, A "CEREMONY" WAS

HELD BY THE "PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE" (APPARENTLY OF DARLAC PROVINCE) AND THE "MILITARY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE" OF THE CITY "TO INTRODUCE THEMSELVES TO THE PUBLIC." SENIOR COLONEL YBLOC EBAN (APPARENTLY A MONTAGNARD), CHAIRMAN OF BOTH COMMITTEES, DECLARED IN THE OPENING SPEECH THAT "THE REVOLUTIONARY ADMINISTRATION AND NEW ORDER HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED" AND APPEALED FOR UNITY, STABILITY, RESUMED PRODUCTION, AND THE BUILDING OF "A COMPREHENSIVELY NEW LIFE." THE UNNAMED "VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE TWO COMMITTEES" THEN READ THE "PRG TEN-POINT POLICY ON NEWLY LIBERATED AREAS." SOME 200 "REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL STRATA OF THE LABORING PEOPLE, WORKERS, INTELLECTUALS, WOMEN, YOUTHS, STUDENTS, CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT PRIESTS, AND FOREIGNERS IN THE CITY" ATTENDED. ACCORDING TO THE ACCOUNT, THE WOMEN, YOUTHS, ETHNIC MINORITIES, BUDDHIST AND PROTESTANT "PRIESTS", PEASANTS, AND CHINESE RESIDENTS EXPRESSED THEIR SOLIDARITY (COMMENT: ONE WONDERS ABOUT THE LABORERS, WORKERS, INTELLECTUALS, CATHOLIC PRIESTS (WHOSE BISHOP WAS KILLED), AND THE OTHER FOREIGNERS). THE MEETING ENDED WITH SLOGAN-SHOUTING.

3. COL YBLOC LATER IN THE DAY TOOK A DELEGATION OF THE MILITARY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TO VISIT SEVERAL VILLAGES IN BAN ME THUOT. AT ONE VILLAGE WHICH WAS BOMBED MARCH 11, "KILLING HUNDREDS OF LOCAL VILLAGERS AND WOUNDING MANY OTHERS," YBLOC "CORDIALLY" ASKED ABOUT THE SURVIVORS, DONATED 1500 KGS OF RICE, AND SENT PHYSICIANS TO CARE FOR THE WOUNDED.

4. ON MARCH 19, ACCORDING TO LIB RADIO, THE DOWNTOWN MARKET AREA OF BAN ME THUOT WAS BOMBED ("UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF US AIR FORCE OFFICERS") AND "MORE THAN 200 COMPATRIOTS WERE KILLED OF SERIOUSLY INJURED." FIRST AID AND "EMERGENCY ANTI-AIRCRAFT MEASURES" WERE ORGANIZED BY THE "PRG" ADMINISTRATION.

5. A LIB RADIO CORRESPONDENT, QUOTED BY VNA, PROVIDED A FEATURE STORY MARCH 20, DESCRIBING "THE DAY SO MUCH LONGED FOR BY THE PEOPLE OF BAN ME THUOT." THE CORRESPONDENT REPORTED THAT THE CITY STREETS WERE "DECORATED WITH FLAGS, STREAMERS, POSTERS AND PLACARDS", THAT THERE WAS "A FESTIVE MOOD IN EVERY SCHOOL CLASSROOM," AND THAT "LARGE CROWDS...LINED THE ROADS TO WELCOME THE NEW ADMINISTRATION." STUDENTS UNCLASSIFIED

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WERE CLEANING THE STREETS AND WHITEWASHING OVER THE "VESTIGES OF THE DECADENT CULTURE AND SLANDEROUS PROPAGANDA" OF THE GVN AS WELL AS "HELPING MEMBERS OF THE LIBERATION SECURITY SERVICE TRACK DOWN DIEHARD AGENTS OF SAIGON STILL IN HIDING." "THOUSANDS" OF GVN TROOPS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL REPORTEDLY HAD "TURNED THEMSELVES IN" AT A LOCAL SCHOOL, AND AT LEAST ONE WAS REPORTED ASKING FOR A JOB. THE MARKET WAS "CROWDED WITH CUSTOMERS," AND "CHINESE RESIDENTS AND OTHER FOREIGNERS WERE

RETURNING TO THEIR HOMES, AFTER A FEW DAYS IN EVACUATION ON RUBBER PLANTATIONS AROUND THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL. HAVING UNDERSTOOD THE POLICY OF THE PEG, THEY REOPENED THEIR SHOPS." MEDICAL SERVICES WERE RESTORED, ELECTRIC POWER WAS RETURNING, AND "WITHIN ONLY THREE DAYS" THE CITY" ALREADY HAD ENOUGH RUNNING WATER." SEVERAL " FORMER SAIGON FUNCTIONARIES," ALL WITH MONTAGNARD NAMES, "DENOUNCED THE CRIMES OF THEIR AGENTS." ALL IN ALL, CONCLUDED THE CORRESPONDENT, "LIFE IN THE CITY HAD BEEN BROUGHT ALMOST BACK TO NORMAL."

6. COMMENT: THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY A HUNDRED FRENCHMEN AND A NUMBER OF OTHER FOREIGNERS IN BAN ME THOUT AT THE TIME OF ITS CAPTURE, ALONG WITH TEN AMERICANS. THE REFERENCES TO "FOREIGNERS" NOTED ABOVE PROBABLY DO NOT REFER TO THE AMERICANS.
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